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ABSTRACT

Human Scale Education's 1998 conference addressed the creation of schools and learning experiences to foster in young people the attitudes and skills to shape a fairer and more sustainable world. "Values and Vision in Business and Education" (Anita Roddick) argues that educational curricula must contain the language and action of social justice, human rights, community economics, sustainability, and ethics if young people are to understand that they can make a difference to their world. "Education for Citizenship" (Richard Pring) maintains that citizenship education must prepare young people not only for an economic future but also for a political one in which they are expected to participate actively within a democracy. It is difficult to encourage children to discuss, debate, and explore issues within the context of the British national curriculum. "The Ecology of Learning" (Satish Kumar) discusses the need for life-centered education as well as child-centered education. It is essential that children are taught how to value and respect the life of the planet. Workshops discussed applying sustainability themes identified at the U.N. conference in Rio to education; involving students with adult professionals in experiential projects connecting art, design, and environmental education; engaging students, parents, and teachers in dialogue about each other and about implementing change; differences in learning at small schools compared to large, impersonal state schools; and working with government to infuse environmental education and sustainability throughout the national curriculum. (TD)

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educating on a human scale
visions for a sustainable world

Report of Human Scale Education Conference
Lady Margaret Hall, University of Oxford
26 September 1998

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introduction

How can we create schools and learning experiences which will foster in young people the attitudes and skills to shape a fairer and more sustainable world? This was the question posed by Human Scale Education's Annual Conference which took place in September 1998 at Lady Margaret Hall at the University of Oxford. This is a critical question at a time when education is being defined predominantly in terms of raising standards of academic achievement, results and league tables and is infused by a set of corporate values that are encroaching inappropriately every area of human activity.

The most urgent and radical presentation was made by Anita Roddick, a leading protagonist of corporate Britain. She argued that any educational curriculum must contain the language and *action* of social justice, human rights, community economics, sustainability and ethics. If these values do not underpin the content of children's learning and also the environment in which learning takes place there is little chance that young people will understand that they can make a difference to their world through their own efforts.

Her belief that children should be critically engaged in social and environmental problems worldwide was backed up by Richard Pring, Professor of Educational Studies at the University of Oxford. He argued that education for citizenship should be central to an education which prepares young people not only for an economic future but for a political one in which they are expected to participate actively within a democratic form of life. Professor Pring talked about the difficulties of encouraging children to discuss, debate and explore issues within the context of the National Curriculum.

How the values of sustainable development and social justice are incorporated into the day to day learning experience of children was the focus of a number of workshops. A key theme of the day was that an experiential approach to education is a major factor in enabling children to engage with these issues in a meaningful way. It is very difficult however for this to happen within the large and impersonal structures of many of our schools. One important workshop was on how small schools can meet the challenge of sustainability. The relationship between human scale structures, the development of social responsibility in the child and environmental awareness was strongly made by the head teacher of The Small School at Hartland, one of the flagship schools of Human Scale Education.

In his inspirational closing speech Satish Kumar, founder of Schumacher College and editor of Resurgence magazine, talked about the need for life-centred education (as well as child centred education). For if we do not teach children, above all else, how to value and respect the life of the planet, we are lost.

This report includes the edited transcripts of the talks of the three speakers as well as reports from each of the workshops. We hope that they will give you a flavour of what was an inspiring and informative day.

Fiona Carnie

values and vision in business and education

Anita Roddick

I am going to talk about education in a place where we rarely think about it, but where it is *vital:* I want to talk about education in business. And I don't want to address the sorts of skills education that business people always focus on: computer skills, customer service skills, management skills. Instead I want to talk about ethics, about education in values.

I am a former teacher and much of my thinking on education has been shaped by the profound lessons I learned during my teaching and training years.

Thirty years ago it didn't take me long to work out that education philosophy can be divided into two schools of thinking. The first states that the child knows little and is essentially raw material to be processed: years of structured education will make children useful to our society, and also to themselves. This thinking asks kids to listen unquestioningly to authority; asserts that education is just knowledge contained in subjects, and that the purpose of education is to prepare children for their roles in the economy, to make them good workers. But this school of thought leaves out sensitivity to others, non-violent behaviour, respect, intuition, imagination and a sense of awe and wonderment.

The second school develops these things. It sees children as a unique set of potentials, and it helps them develop the habit of freedom. It encourages them to celebrate who and what they are. This is the type of education we find in the Steiner/Waldorf schools, in the fabled Summerhill, in the schools of the Human Scale Education movement. This approach seems to be the only one that nourishes imagination and the inner voice. As Rudolf Steiner said "the need for imagination, a sense of truth and a feeling of responsibility - these are the three forces which are the very nerve of education."

What we must have as teachers, as parents, even as business people is a moral sympathy with everything we do. All of us here should work to develop free human beings who can develop purpose, imagination, a sense of truth and a feeling of empathy and responsibility. And vision.

Vision – an image of the future

I like the word "vision". It's a 'see' word. I see pictures and images. I like it because it suggests the future. Envisioning the future is like gazing across the horizon of time and imagining that great things are ahead. I like it because it has a standard of excellence, an ideal. I like it because it has the quality of uniqueness. It is reflected in what we say is different about your school, our company. It implies a choice of values.

Values are undoubtedly the cornerstone of my business. They have to be totally integrated into our products and practices, into how we sell, what we do and how we do it as everyday we are open for business in every shop around the world.

Open up a typical management book and you will find it hard to avoid words like leadership, team-building, corporate culture or customer service. However, you will be lucky to find words like ethics, justice or human rights, social auditing or spirituality. What is more profound is the lack of dissenting views in economic thinking.

Any business programme or educational curriculum, whether set in a local or global context, must contain the language and action of social justice, human rights, community economics, sustainability and ethics, as well as the productivity of the human soul. These are the issues teachers and business people ignore at their peril. Why are these subjects so important? I'll tell you why.

I see business as capable of alienating humanity in every way. I see corporate crimes in abundance, with the globe rapidly becoming a playground for those who can move capital and projects quickly from place to place. They roam from country to country, with no restrictions, in search of the lowest wages, the loosest environmental regulations and the most docile and desperate workers.

Putting ethics into economics

We hear much about increased rates of growth in production, but little about stronger communities or healthier children. We hear much about the march of progress, but little about people and cultures being trampled underfoot.

We need businesses that encourage countries to educate their children, heal their sick, value the work of women, respect human rights and promote sustainability. We need to measure progress by human development, not gross national product.

Business is the place where we have our greatest daily contact with other human beings. It is also in business that most of us expend our creative energy and where we form relationships that most influence our daily conduct. It would be folly to fail to see the role business can and must play in the development of human beings to their fullest potential. My vision is this: that the workplace will become less a factory for the production of goods and more an incubator for the human spirit.

I'd like to take you on a journey, to show how we in The Body Shop are translating the educational values I have just spoken about into everyday business practice. It is a crazy, complicated journey which requires us to experiment, experiment, experiment. Breaking down barriers of traditional ways of working is also exhausting. It's where the best you can do is better than you ever imagined. If the process is managed from the heart, great things in business can and will happen.

Everywhere I travel I meet the excluded and the marginalised. I encounter people (mostly women) who instinctively know how to manage this planet, but who are silenced by a very soulless worldview that privileges the white, the male, and the educated. Yet it is more often these people, their micro-enterprises and organisations who form a ragtag front line in the world-wide struggle to end poverty and environmental destruction. Truly engaged global education must learn to dialogue lovingly and respectfully with all voices.

I hear those voices when I visit communities, whether indigenous or local. Visiting communities is *my* experiential education. Because of the injustices that move me to action, I make the decisions of my soul. Journeying provides insights, and my insight is that the biggest catastrophe out there is poverty. Poverty is the biggest taboo subject, ignored by the media, governments, policy makers and educational programmes. But it is both foolish and dangerous to ignore poverty.

Let me share with you an experience that illuminated me a year ago. I crossed the great American divide travelling through the so-called 'Black Belt' of Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia, to get my first look at extreme poverty in America. I found a guide in Jacob Holdt, a Danish 'vagabond' photographer, who has spent the last twenty years roaming America to photograph the rural black communities.

Poverty fuels revolution the world over. It is poverty that drives desperate people to over-exploit their resources. It doesn't help when we in the West, in our rich countries, find poor-nation collaborators, whether military collaborators, economic collaborators or political collaborators. For this, we deserve a substantial part of the blame for perpetuating the poverty of the majority world.

If governments and global economic planning institutions are to help they have to put the poor first - as active participants, advisors and leaders. Any institution that mobilises its grassroots is a light at the end of the tunnel, because the only true experts on poverty are the poor.

One simple way poverty can be tackled is by supporting small scale economic activities - that other major taboo subject in current economic thinking. In my company we are always looking for fair trading initiatives with local communities. We believe small is beautiful. Today these initiatives may be only a small part of our overall business, but we are committed to making this a growing part of our sourcing policy.

By themselves these initiatives of The Body Shop will not transform the global economy, but they do transform my company's thinking about our responsibility as a business. And I would rather be measured by how I treat weaker and frailer communities I trade with than by how great are my profits.

I will tell you about one of The Body Shop's fair trading initiatives which illustrates the potential of micro-enterprise in my business.

Each time a product is bought from Teddy Exports in India, a twenty percent premium is added to the price. What happens with the money is exceptional: it funds the activities of Teddy Trust, Teddy Primary School and Teddy Trust Clinic. Day care

facilities are at hand and free education is provided for the children at the Montessori-style school on the factory campus.

Ask yourselves some questions. Are we making business faster or are we making it *better?* Is business - and the teaching of business and economics - ever concerned enough about the development of the human spirit? How can we educate people away from a values system of endless increasing affluence to one in which the core values are community, caring for the environment, creating or growing things and personal human development?

In my company we've found an answer: you empower people. Empowerment means that everyone is responsible for creating the organisation's culture. We do it through the politics of consciousness. What does that mean?

Politics of consciousness

For too long, business has been teaching that politics and commerce are two different arenas. They are not. Political awareness and activism must be incorporated into global management. In a global world, there are no value-free or politically disentangled actions. Business leaders and educators need to realise this. The personal becomes the political, which becomes the global.

However, while it is easy to hug a tree and save a rabbit, it has always been difficult to talk about the role of business in solving human rights abuses. This needs to change, and the best way to start that process is to engage the hearts and minds of the young people through the process of education, so that they walk onto the business scene believing in a better way.

The quality of life in many urban areas is disappearing as large numbers of middle class parents abandon the cities. Businesses are leaving too, taking with them a sizeable tax base. The result is a situation where too few add money to the local coffers and this becomes part of the problem.

We set up our Family Centre in 1990 at the time when Mrs Thatcher had more testosterone than her entire cabinet put together and when female employees with families who wanted to return to work were given no support at all. Other companies have since followed suit, responding more quickly and positively to employees' needs than government.

When governments do not care for the weak and frail, businesses have got to come in and change that. Retailers who want to protect their high streets have to look after their backstreets. They have to help the unemployed and the homeless and get them back on their feet.

In the UK, in 1991, we helped set up a newspaper called The Big Issue. It is sold by the homeless who keep a percentage of the cover price. It is now the fastest-growing street newspaper in the country, selling a quarter of a million copies each issue. Hundreds of people are working as a result of this initiative.

The Body Shop is driven by an ongoing dialogue between itself and staff, shops and customers, business and the community. If I had to name a single all-purpose instrument of leadership it would be communication. Leaders must communicate in ways that move people to action. However passionately you care, if you can't communicate in that way, you might as well not be there. Similarly, the great aim of education is not knowledge but action.

Whichever way you look at it, something is missing in most of our lives. Maybe it's the belief in the divine spark, that sense of awe and wonderment. Where has it gone? Every tribal group or pre-industrial group that I have worked with seems to have it. I think it's because they are storytellers.

One lesson I learned from my contact with indigenous people is the power of storytelling. It is the basis of their educational system. The Celtic people, for example, insisted that only the poets could be teachers. Why? It is their belief that knowledge that is not passed through the heart is dangerous,

Perhaps we have the mentality of a teenager. We hate blank spaces. Nothing is more boring than a paper bag. Therefore any space provides an opportunity to create an atmosphere, deliver a message, make a point. We give people the phone number and addresses of organisations which they can bombard with challenges to change course. I believe in promoting our products through global culture and linking them to political and social messages.

Giving the public a phone number to help the efforts of The Missing Persons Bureau will not increase sales of a specific product. What it does, however, is create a banner of values; it links us to the community. Of the 25 missing persons advertised by this method, nine have been found. The latest is a young mother, who has been missing for three years. She has been found in France.

We have also learned that in this decade, to educate and communicate, we have to be daring, enlivening and different.

Business as a force for positive social change

Many businesses, including The Body Shop, are part of the social responsibility movement, a movement that has, over the last decade, been trying to redefine the strong grassroots nature and progressive practices of business. This movement is trying to put idealism back on the agenda. We want a new paradigm, a whole new framework, for seeing and understanding that business can and must be a force for positive social and ecological change. It must not only avoid hideous evil - it must actively do good.

At the beginning I urged that business education in a global context must be an experiential education, containing the language and action of social justice, human rights, community economics, sustainability and ethics, as well as the productivity of the human soul. I hope that I have shown you how it is possible to put that into action. It's up to you now to be bold, daring and different and remember that imagination is more important than knowledge.

education for citizenship

Richard Pring

In this talk I want to bring together the current interest in citizenship with the long established research into 'political literacy'. It is significant that the person who first invented the term 'political literacy', Professor Bernard Crick, should be chairing the Department for Education and Employment committee on citizenship. Had he not been doing so, I suspect that the underlying concept of citizenship, on which the work of the committee has been based, would be very different.

My comments are two-fold. First, I want to say something on 'the Crick Agenda'. Second, I shall raise some of the difficulties within it which need to be addressed.

The Crick Agenda

Crick introduced the concept of 'political literacy' in 1964, and he and his colleagues have ever since constantly argued for a political education with such a notion of 'literacy' at its centre.

Basically, to be 'politically literate' means that one has a grasp of the basic concepts through which the social world might be understood from a distinctively political point of view. That social world is 'sieved' through such concepts as 'power', 'authority', 'legal rights and obligations', 'government' (of various kinds). To be politically educated is to acquire these concepts, to be able to employ them in thinking and arguing about the social world in which one necessarily has one's being, and to be able to perceive what has happened and is happening in the light of them.

As in the case of any concepts these can be grasped at various levels of sophistication. Children at a very young age have an implicit understanding of 'power' and its exercise and distribution, and no doubt one could argue for a continuum from such practical understanding to the sophisticated analysis and distinctions made by political philosophers. Educating children politically would be to give them this increasingly sophisticated grasp of those concepts through which we understand the distribution and exercise of power within society, and in particular the various ways in which that power and authority are exercised between government and governed. That understanding must embrace such basic moral concepts as 'justice' and 'fairness', 'rights' and 'obligations'. But, as we all know the logical implications of such moral concepts are grasped differently at different stages of development.

The Crick agenda in political literacy coincided with the work of Jerome Bruner in social education, although (surprisingly) the two never met and the similarities in educational thinking were coincidental. Bruner argued that curriculum development lay, first, in the identification of those 'key ideas' which structured our thinking in the most fruitful way and, second, in putting those ideas across to children according to their 'mode of representation'. According to Bruner, any idea which structures the

thinking within the intellectual disciplines (of physics, say, or of chemistry, or biology) can be put across to any child at any age in an intellectually respectable form. The curriculum was a sort of 'spiral' constantly revisiting these key ideas but in an ever more complex, sophisticated and symbolic mode of representation. Bruner applied this thinking to his 'Man: A Course of Study', one of the most intriguing and influential programmes of social studies for young people (roughly aged 8 to 13) that has ever been devised.

The parallels here are significant. Political and social education lie essentially not in fact-giving, nor in forming this or that political belief, but in developing those public concepts through which the world we inhabit might be understood. Only then can the young person engage intelligently with the issues - follow the arguments, challenge conclusions in the light of evidence, see things from a different point of view, and develop an independent though reasoned and justified political perspective. For Bruner, those key concepts were the ones drawn from social studies, anthropology, ethics, etc. which enabled us to understand what makes us human, how we became so, how we might become more so. For Crick, focusing upon the distinctively political dimension of what it was to be human. the key ideas were those which enabled us to see things from the point of view of the distribution of power and of the relation between the governed and their government, whether local or national.

In both cases, however, the acquisition of those concepts was not enough. Certain skills and attitudes, especially those skills and attitudes concerned with engagement in serious reflection and discussion, needed to be developed. One might refer here to an *interest* in those issues which affect human well-being, justice and fairness, getting at the truth, openness to evidence and reasoning. And such engagement does require skills, particularly the social skills in handling contrary arguments, in listening to alternative points of view, and in handling emotive responses to positions sincerely held. One needs to be *taught* how to conduct and to participate in political discussion and argument.

Perhaps the most apt metaphor through which political education so conceived might be understood is that of Oakeshott, for whom education was an initiation into a *conversation* between the generations of mankind in which the young learner is introduced to the voices of poetry, of philosophy, of science, and so on. Political education lies in introducing young people to an important part of that conversation, and thus to the concepts and arguments which give it its distinctive character. But, as with any good conversation, although it must conform to certain general rules, its outcome cannot be predicted. The young learner is apprenticed, as it were, to a tradition of thinking which reaches no certain conclusions, only the means to engage with the intractable problems of social, economic and political life.

It is fascinating, too, to recall that when Crick was setting forth his agenda for political literacy, when Bruner was directing his programme of social studies in which the young learners explored what it meant to be human, and when Oakeshott described education as a conversation between the generations, Stenhouse developed a humanities curriculum in which controversial ideas of practical living - the very stuff of political debate - were put at the core of the humanities within the school curriculum, not pushed off to the fringe or eliminated as too dangerous for consideration.

It was Stenhouse's argument that important issues on which society was divided - racism, relations between the sexes, respect for authorities of various kinds, the use of violence in the pursuit of what one thought was right, poverty, social injustice - should find a central place within the humanities. Indeed, it was argued that it was precisely in relation to such issues that one saw the importance and relevance of the humanities - of literature, drama, poetry, history, social studies, ethics and political literacy. These provided the resource upon which young people should draw - the evidence, if you like, in their deliberations about issues on which they were divided, in which there was no agreed or certain conclusion, but about which it was possible to be more or less rational when testing out one's argument in the light of criticism and evidence.

There was then a powerful argument emerging for a political education which embraced the following: an acquisition of those concepts which enabled young people to understand their social world from a distinctively political point of view; the representation of such key ideas or concepts at different levels of sophistication and the careful nurturing of that conceptual development; the opportunity for young people to engage in the deliberation about those controversial issues which are central to political life; and the acquisition of those skills and attitudes which are essential for such deliberation and tolerance of disagreement. It is, however, important to realise that, to encourage such education, the teachers needed those very same skills, attitudes and concepts and the ethos of the schools had to be such as to tolerate diverse conclusions on sensitive matters.

It is a sad reflection on the last few decades that, despite political education being undeniably important if there is to be intelligent participation in a democratic form of life, the Crick agenda never won a place in the curriculum. Indeed, although it received a mention within the personal and social education area of the Assessment of Performance Unit and in the HMI areas of experience, it had no place on the National Curriculum of England and Wales. Political education perhaps appeared too dangerous to those politicians who have clear ideas about the nature and distribution of power within society and, in particular, on the relation between government and governed. Indeed, in the clear 'business terms' in which the central government now controls education (see below) it is not easy to see the place for the political understanding and the political deliberation which the Crick agenda promoted.

It is not surprising, therefore, that, following the 1988 Education Act of England and Wales, political education should emerge in a more impoverished form as a kind of a citizenship education which did not develop 'political literacy' or encourage the challenging deliberation which political education required. Citizenship, therefore, was confined to a *cross-curriculum theme.* As such it gained no brownie points in the assessment system which placed a school high or low in the league tables.

Furthermore, citizenship reflected the values of a more consumerist society in which concern for individual rights had a prominent place - a society in which the Prime Minister proclaimed the Citizens' Charter as a 'revolution in choice, in information, in accountability and in individual power', described as 'a Magna Carta for our time'. Hence, the National Curriculum Council guidelines on this 'cross curriculum theme' and the Speakers Commission on Citizenship's 1990 report 'Encouraging Citizenship' were rather feeble acknowledgements that students had to be helped to acquire the skills, attitudes and understanding relevant to participation in a democracy. However the

crucial elements (which need to be systematically taught) of political literacy were not embraced nor the implications of encouraging the systematic deliberation of controversial and divisive issues considered.

Problems

The recent interim report *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools* refers to 'three heads on one body': social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy'. Clearly there is room in theory for those crucial elements which I have described, and indeed one might expect 'the Crick agenda' to be put into effect. Nonetheless, I have two major reasons for doubting.

First, political education, whether as an essential ingredient of the broader proposals for citizenship or as confined to 'political literacy', does itself take place within a political context of education which has to accommodate it. That political context - that is, the context in which the power and authority of teachers are affected by a political philosophy which shapes their relationships, on the one hand, with those who fund and organise the system and, on the other, with the newly described clients - was recently referred to thus by a senior civil servant at the DfEE. We must, he said, 'think in business terms', and that requires recourse to the 'quality circle'. The 'quality circle' has six points. First, one 'defines the product' - that which precisely one aims to produce. Second, one 'defines the process' - the exact means which can be shown most likely to produce that product. Third, one empowers the stakeholders - the various members of the community who have a stake in the 'business' and who require performance indicators of success and failure. Fourth, one 'measures the quality' - that is, whether the product is up to specification. Fifth, one empowers the clients, giving precise and clear information about the product so that they can make informed and rational choices. Finally, one creates the partnership between clients, stakeholders and deliverers of the product, so that they can work together, redefining the product and reappraising the process in the light of the various measurements and evaluations.

This, of course, is the language of management which reflects a tightly controlled curriculum, a faith in the research into effectiveness and into the minutiae of teaching strategy, lists of performance indicators upon which a detailed assessment and inspectorial system is based, the reduction of that complex transaction between teacher and learner to a few simple numerical indicators which are easily accessible and the emergence of Education Action Zones (to be led by business people who may well have economic goals in mind) as a basis for the partnership which redefines and reappraises.

Such a centralised and controlled system has little room for a deliberation about the ends of education. There can be little room in a managed system for an open-ended 'conversation' or for a deviant but serious response to matters of supreme personal, social and political importance. The emergence of a highly centralised curriculum in England and Wales, closely monitored by HMI, has left little room for an exploration of issues of controversial and practical living or of political import. Furthermore, such exploration can be little encouraged where teachers themselves are professionally excluded from the deliberation about the aims, including the political ends, of education. Schools cannot be the location of that 'political conversation' in which the young learner is initiated into the language and deliberations of a political form of life

when quite different, indeed contrary, metaphors shape how we understand and evaluate what is educationally worthwhile.

The second problem which the Crick agenda had to face is the lack of memory of the new guardian class arrogantly telling teachers what to do and how to do it as though there was not an education literature and research of such matters. 'Citizenship' and 'political education' may have a place in cross-curriculum themes and in the latest, detailed advice on 'personal, social, moral and spiritual education', but it is as though the authors are unaware of the notion of 'political literacy' or of the psychological work of Bruner on curriculum development within social studies, or of the extensive evaluation studies into the teaching of controversial issues, or of the massive research already conducted on moral education and development. This is not surprising because, under new management, the very institutions which preserved that memory and which ensured a continuity of thinking have been destroyed or decimated - the various professional subject bodies, the teachers centres, the HMI as a large and politically independent body, the central advisory councils, the Schools Council.

Conclusion

My conclusion is two-fold. First, the teaching of citizenship should be central to an education which prepares young people not only for an economic future but for a political one in which they are expected to participate actively within a democratic form of life. Furthermore, such teaching of citizenship should have at its core both the political literacy which for so long Crick has argued for and the active deliberation of those issues which divide people politically within society. No political education can eschew the unpredictability of beliefs once matters of political significance are opened up for general exploration.

My second conclusion is, however, that any proposals for such an education cannot ignore the wider political context in which the curriculum for citizenship would have to be implemented. Such a context, suffering from the 'management speak' of central control and order, is not conducive to that forum of debate, discussion, deliberation, reflection, exploration which is crucial to political education.

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the ecology of learning

Satish Kumar

The two speakers in the morning (Richard Pring and Anita Roddick) have spoken of education as a resource for human development. I want to add another dimension: Education for Environmental Sustainability.

Education should develop our understanding of the non-human world. In the past, art, philosophy, religion, science have all been human-centred. The human project, especially through science and technology, has been to conquer the world, and even the space beyond our planet. This has led to the current crisis of the environment. Therefore concerns about the earth (water, soil, air, oceans, animals) have become important and should be part of education. If these elements are not included in education then education itself will become irrelevant. The physical and psychological well-being of humanity rests on our relationship with the earth. Education is only holistic and complete if it embraces our love of the whole earth. Children should be educated to care for the whole environment. We should not educate them to conquer and control the environment but to enjoy it and to look after it. To seek justice only for people is not enough. There is a clear connection between justice for humans and justice for all the natural world. Environmental justice demands that we respect the rights of nature alongside human rights.

The image of the child as an acorn is apt. It is small but is has the potential to grow into an oak tree. Every human is a potential Buddha. It has been said that an artist is not a special kind of person but that each person is a special kind of artist. We must respect the uniqueness of each child, his or her particular way of being creative. Only through our example can we teach children how to love people and nature. As parents and as teachers we must give children nothing but our love. We mustn't try to force our ideas, our beliefs and our aspirations upon children.

To educate children for environmental sustainability we need an appropriate context. In my view it is the context of small schools which is right for this purpose. Small schools can help teachers to give love of nature to their children. It is not easy to do this in a class of twenty five children or in a school of 2,000. It is not easy to do it if you are ordered by external authorities to do this, that and the other. Size plays a vital role in facilitating or preventing education for sustainability but this is not recognised. People tend to complain about shortage of resources. In fact schools have plenty of resources but these are not necessarily well used. Our culture has become one of wanting more and more all the time rather than looking at how we are using what we have. We are obsessed with new machines and new technology. At government level and in the media there is only talk of more and more resources. More money and more resources will solve all our problems, we are told. But they don't. We are never satisfied with how much we have. And this dissatisfaction is spreading the world over. Globalisation is extending to all cultures. Everywhere people want more and more. This is leading to a global monoculture - the same things are found everywhere - and to ever growing consumerism. Our egotistical way of life has created the present environmental crisis

and at the moment the education system contributes more to the problem than to the solution.

We must teach young people to celebrate and enjoy without over-consuming. It is vital to teach children how to enjoy things, not how to possess them. We mustn't instil in them the urge to get out into the world to conquer the markets and control the environment. We must teach them to enjoy the natural world, to appreciate the magic and beauty of the environment around us. At present we are told, in effect, to teach children to be egotistical and self-centred. Our books teach children that humans are in charge of the world and nature is there to serve humanity. This is wrong. We should teach children to be receptive, to open up to everything around them and enjoy it while being content with the simpler ways of living.

Care for the environment and human scale go together. At the moment big is seen as better: big schools, big hospitals and hypermarkets. One government after another has spent a lot of money trying to improve the material lives of the worse off by building large housing estates. All these large scale developments are environmental disasters as well as human disasters. Environmentally sensitive development has to be small scale.

We must not be worried because Human Scale Education is small. We must see ourselves as the yeast in bread. It's not even visible and cannot be tasted but it makes all the difference by making the bread rise! Our task seems vast - to make the next century one of sanity, of peace with the environment and with one another. Yet important movements start from the fringe of society. We must not be afraid. We are all responsible for change. It will not come from the top. It is the work of small groups of people to sow the seeds of education for sustainability.

The first thing to do is to relax and enjoy the environment, all that's wonderful around us. In this way we shall transform ourselves. The second thing is to enjoy who we are, our unique identity. If we value ourselves we can value the children. If we don't value ourselves we will feel angry in our heart and will be unable to value others. The third thing to do is to share our joy and satisfaction with others.

The task in itself is not that difficult. Much of it is just common sense. But Schumacher said: "Common sense is no longer common." The task of Human Scale Education is to restore that common sense starting from small beginnings. Huge forests grow from seeds. Do not be worried because you are just sowing seeds. They are the seeds of a new kind of education which puts the earth and the environment centre stage. This is the most exciting challenge educationists face today.

Stephen Sterling started the workshop by finding out how conscious of sustainability issues we all were by using a participative technique associated with Circle Time. Stephen works as an independent consultant, lecturer and writer in environmental education and education for sustainability, particularly with WWF-UK's 'Reaching Out' programme of education for sustainability training and on the South Bank University MSc in Environment and Development Education. During the course of the workshop we discussed what Education for Sustainability (EfS) was, why it was needed and how it could be done.

The two key questions at the heart of education for sustainable development are 'what contribution should education make to sustainability?' and 'what contribution should sustainability make to education?' International rhetoric since the Rio summit and before has been talking about how education should serve as an agent of change towards sustainable development but this is not possible unless education itself changes to take much more account of the implications of sustainability in its curriculum, pedagogy, organisation and ethos. In order to discover the huge range of issues covered by EfS, we looked at different parts of a daily newspaper in groups of 3. We found that the issues of sustainability were to be found everywhere, in particular in the adverts encouraging limitless consumption. It was difficult to find positive references in the papers.

Stephen explained that there was a wide range of complex issues involved but they all revolved around environmental, social and economic sustainability and their interrelationship from local to global scales. They could be interpreted as a need to balance and sustain environmental, social and economic capital but in the current system the growth of economic capital was at the expense of environmental and social capital, with the result that the overall trend was away from sustainability in all three areas.

The work in many localities under the banner of Local Agenda 21 (LA21), arising from the UN Conference in Rio, was helping the public to envision a better way forward.

The 13 themes identified by the Local Government Management Board that had had a seminal influence on the course of Local Agenda 21 programmes and initiatives in many local authorities were:

1. resources are used efficiently and waste is minimised by closing cycles;
2. pollution is limited to levels which natural systems can cope with without damage;
3. the diversity of nature is valued and protected;
4. where possible, local needs are met locally;
5. everyone has access to good food, water, shelter and fuel at reasonable cost;
6. everyone has the opportunity to undertake satisfying work in a diverse economy;
7. people's good health is protected;
8. access to facilities, services, goods and other people is not achieved at the expense of the environment;

9. people live without the fear of personal violence from crime or persecution;
10. everyone has access to skills, knowledge and information;
11. all sections of the community are empowered to participate in decision-making;
12. opportunities for culture, leisure and recreation are readily available to all;
13. diversity and local distinctiveness are valued and protected.

Stephen explained that these were 'normative indicators', i.e. they described a desirable state. Many LA21 groups and some schools had used these as a basis for developing normative indicators for their own locality. These could then be monitored using descriptive indicators - for example regarding air pollution levels or the number of locally owned shops - to show whether the community was moving towards or away from their idea of sustainability.

Stephen then said a little about how the concepts of EfS had developed over the past 8 years. There were convergences with a number of movements that had sought increased relevance in the curriculum, such as peace education, development education, environment education, personal and social education, health education, conflict resolution, etc. and indeed human scale education.

In essence, Stephen agreed with the American educationalist David Orr who describes it as 'connective education'. There are practical implications in EfS for curriculum and pedagogy but beyond this EfS also suggests the shape of a new, more participative and integrated educational paradigm more suited for the challenges of our time. These issues are explored in some depth in a recent book he had edited with John Huckle (*Education for Sustainability*, published by Earthscan at £17.95).

At the end of the workshop, Stephen referred to the work of a group he had led which had written, on behalf of the Government's Panel on Education for Sustainable Development, a paper on learning outcomes for Education for Sustainable Development. The panel had submitted it to the DfEE and the QCA as a contribution to the national curriculum review.

Three useful documents were handed out. A sheet from the WWF Reaching Out programme summarised the knowledge, skills and values which we might want to inform a curriculum for EfS. Stephen said that these should be looked at critically and creatively because the debate was open and evolving. Another sheet summarised the key concepts of ecological literacy as defined by David Orr. The last was an attractive leaflet produced by Dorset Agenda 21 setting out the meaning and role of EfS in Dorset.

Martin Diamond

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changing places: young people's participation in shaping their environment

This workshop was led by Eileen Adams, who has been involved for many years in art, design and environmental education. She was director of the 'Art and the Built Environment Project' and has been influenced in her work by the ideas of Colin Ward - also a supporter of Human Scale Education. The workshop was attended by delegates who between them had a wide range of experiences and interests including parents and teachers, researchers and students. Two central themes were the connections between art and design education and environmental education, and the potential the *Changing Places* projects described have for engaging children in learning which is grounded in real experience. These projects were not just exercises on paper, but made a real difference to the school, and sometimes the neighbourhood environment. The emphasis throughout was on participation and co-operation.

The content of this workshop is difficult to convey in words - the power was in the images, shown on 2 projectors in parallel and drawn from projects in and around schools. Some of the key images were:

- **Glasgow in the 1950s**

Eileen recalled how as a child she had been free to wander around the streets and bombed sites in Glasgow. She had much more freedom than most children are now allowed and consequently had a greater knowledge of and connection with her environment.

- **mazes**

One school project was based on mazes and games which are never ending. Mazes were designed and then drawn in chalk and painted on the playground. The mazes were not regarded as permanent, however. Pupils monitored how they were used, so that when they faded new ideas and designs could be created.

- **mud**

A good example of the power of images to bring about change was at a school where photos were taken of the mud in the play areas. Before these could be used in an exhibition, the school was working on making improvements.

- **architects' designs**

Architecture students made presentations of their designs at a school and described how they had been created. Pupils looked at the need for designs to be robust and practical, and had the chance to experiment with bricklaying and other skills.

- **bridges**

Pupils were asked to design bridges and then visited an exhibition of architects' bridge designs: 'Living Bridges'. This meant they had some idea of the processes involved in design work before the exhibition: conceptualising ideas, testing ideas, working in teams and making presentations.

- **Fire of London**

One school created a model of London as part of a project on the Fire of London - and on completion, set fire to it.

All these slides showed children, young people, teachers, architects and planners working together, fully engaged in the task. This way of approaching environmental and art education is a powerful means of breaking down barriers of age and professional status and promoting democracy and participation.

In the discussion which followed Eileen was asked how such collaborative ventures could flourish in a time when schools and pupils are urged to compete with one another. Clearly, *Changing Places* projects would be one way in which education about democracy and citizenship could be integrated into the curriculum, in a practical way, not just as abstract ideas. Eileen also spoke about the need for sustainability to include equity. A key question is who decides how the environment should be managed. In the end, she said, education is about how we relate to each other and how we relate to our environment.

Celia Beeson

Eileen Adams has co-authored with Sue Ingham the book ***Changing Places: Children's Participation in Environmental Planning*** *published in 1998 by The Children's Society, Edward Rudolph House, Margery Street, London WC1X 0JL, tel. 0171 837 4299, fax 0171 837 0211*

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partners in change

Being only too familiar with the atmosphere of uneasiness and discomfort often accompanying attempts to discuss values, attitudes and emotions in the staffrooms of large comprehensives, I was keen to hear a "behind-the-scenes" account of *Partners in Change* from Colin Morrison of the TASC Agency in Edinburgh who worked on the project.

This one-year project, funded as part of Human Scale Education's Secondary School Project, focussed on pupils, parents and teachers of one Year 9 (Scottish Year 2) class at James Gillespie's High School in Edinburgh. Gillespie's is a large city-centre, multi-racial school and the project arose out of a desire to make a reality of the school's Values Statement. It was hoped that participation would directly enhance the educational experience of all those taking part and that it would be possible also to identify ways of impacting on the rest of the school.

It was decided to work for half the year with each group - pupils, parents and teachers - separately, allowing them to explore how they felt about school and each other. Given a certain amount of pent-up emotion and some resentment, this "working - through" of thoughts and feelings was obviously necessary. Colin talked about the difficulties of guiding pupils towards discussing issues rather than just complaining about individuals or incidents. This first phase ended with each group writing messages to the others, beginning with "You should try to . . . . . ". These covered a wall of the workshop room and made fascinating reading. The Class Community Conference in Term 2, where the three groups shared what they had been doing and exchanged the messages, was felt by all to be a high point in the project. There was frank discussion and an agenda set for future work.

Colin's account of the student sessions was especially encouraging. He described them as an exciting introduction to democracy, pervaded by an atmosphere of justice and caring. It would have been interesting to know more about how the schools management team presented the project to the whole staff. Colin admitted that some non-involved staff did put up some opposition, being nervous about the implications for pupil attitudes to discipline created by the project's working methods and the topics tackled. Lack of time prevented Colin giving further details.

In the pupil sessions, relationship problems and negative behaviour such as bullying were confronted and dealt with. The project aimed to give the message that every individual has some power to change for the better the quality of the relationships he or she has. Interestingly, Colin commented that towards the end of the project these same issues were beginning to be touched upon amongst the teachers too, but that real progress in this area would probably be much further down the line - as indeed would genuine ongoing dialogue between the three groups, however successful this one-year project may have been.

Hopefully, there will be funding for Phase 2 of the project, to be managed by pupils and parents. This would include an expanded vision of the first-year pupil induction process, further development of peer education and the formation of an open School Values Council for pupils, parents and staff. The workshop left the impression that a significant number of teachers at James Gillespie's do believe that values and emotions are key elements in learning. They have been given the opportunity to say so and to offer one class at least a short experience of a different way of being at school. With or without Phase 2, this is cause for celebration.

From an environmentalist's point of view the task of changing values amongst young people is particularly challenging. Only if new attitudes towards preserving the planet are forged in school can sustainability ever be realised. The James Gillespie experience gives us an inside view of the complexity of the process.

Lynne Davies

how small schools can meet the challenge of sustainability

The workshop was led by Caroline Walker, head teacher of The Small School at Hartland in Devon. Caroline opened with her thoughts on the meaning of sustainability. She offered three different definitions:

- meeting current human needs without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their needs
- living within the carrying capacity of the Earth's natural systems.
- living today, but remembering tomorrow

Agenda 21 (UNCED 1992) states that "education is critical for promoting sustainable development." The Rio Summit+5 meeting in 1997 defined education for sustainability as having the following characteristics

- lifelong learning;
- interdisciplinary education;
- partnerships;
- empowerment.

The workshop continued by looking at education for sustainability with respect to small schools in general and the Small School at Hartland in particular.

Characteristics

We discussed the specific characteristics of a sustainable school starting with the commitment that most schools make to "value and respect all pupils, teachers, staff and parents."
Caroline suggested that this was only possible in a real sense if the numbers of people working together was small so that meaningful relationships could develop. She gave examples of how her school works in a non-hierarchical way. The quality of human relationships at the schools are of paramount importance. All people involved in the school have a role in decision-making within the school. All staff are paid the same salary rate. She reminded us of the points made by Professor Richard Pring earlier in the day regarding how literature - story telling and poetry - and drama, music and dance can be used to examine and learn about how we interact together.

Caroline described how preparing and sharing meals together is at the heart of the Small School's day and is a powerful mechanism for learning about the food we eat, our environment, our relationship to the planet and to each other. It also gives a great opportunity for growing food at the school and for finding ways to support local farmers and suppliers of local produce.

Curriculum

We then turned our thoughts to what sort of curriculum a small school might offer. John Rhymer of Bishopswood Environmental Centre in Birmingham suggests that a sustainable school should:

- provide the knowledge, understanding and skills to make informed choices about the environment.
- empower students and staff to participate in resolving environmental problems.
- help pupils understand the interconnectedness between environmental, economic, and industrial development, citizenship and personal and social issues. Address the spiritual, ethical and aesthetic relationships between people and the planet.
- help pupils to recognise the distinction between quality of life and standard of living.
- develop its grounds to provide a stimulating and varied environment for play, learning and wildlife.

High priority should be given to providing a role model of responsibility and sustainable behaviour for students, staff and the local community by the way in which the school chooses to;-

- develop an environmental policy
- use water carefully
- involve students and staff in energy conservation
- recycle as much as possible
- encourage healthy eating low on the food chain
- encourage use of public transport, walking and cycling
- purchase recycled materials from local sustainable resources when possible
- avoid the use of toxic or damaging materials
- enable pupils to grow food in a sustainable way

Caroline described how the structure of lessons at the Small School allows time and space to examine environmental issues in a critical way and to consider how school policies contribute to or help in resolving problems of pollution, waste, energy consumption, use of resources etc. as they relate to the school. Time is also made to encourage small groups and individuals to participate in policy making decisions. This prepares young people to be more actively involved in social change. The interdisciplinary nature of the curriculum in general with its use of small groups and enquiry-based learning is conducive to learning about the inter-relatedness of environmental and social issues.

In order to involve both the community and parents in contributing to the curriculum they must be empowered to do so. Caroline described how her students studied a wide range of topics, from robot building to boat building through the Small School's use of the skills and expertise found in members of the local community.

Students at the Small School are able to take GCSEs and other public examinations if they so wish but are encouraged to take a maximum of five. This is the minimum requirement for university entrance. However by reducing the number of exams taken time is left for the study of other subjects in a freer way than is demanded by GCSE

syllabi. The Small School offers at present, sixteen subject options using parents, members of the community and qualified teachers as facilitators. A very impressive number demonstrating that even small schools can offer a wide range of options to pupils.

Questions and Discussion

The workshop ended with questions from workshop participants. In particular we wanted to discuss the differences in the way students learn at the Small School in comparison to the large mass institutions within the state system. Caroline suggested that much of what goes on in state schools is "the teaching of the irrelevant to the uninterested" which amused us all greatly.

Caroline concluded the workshop on a positive and encouraging note. It is her view that the present factory system of education has no future and that small pockets of good practice, as exemplified by small schools, will point the way towards a different educational landscape, one in which every child matters.

Julie Ashton

education for sustainable development: public policy and professional practice

This was an extremely well prepared and informative session led by Nick Jones of the Council for Environmental Education (CEE) which nevertheless left me - and I think some others - with a feeling of frustration. The intentions of the Council for Environmental Education are admirable. In conjunction with its member groups - numbering 64 in all and including bodies such as the World Wide Fund for Nature, the RSPB, the Environment Agency as well as Human Scale Education - the CEE aims to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are at the heart of government education policy and practice.

This means working with government, for example through membership of the government's Expert Panel on Sustainable Development in Education. But in working with government the CEE does of course have to work within the parameters set by government. Thus the draft of the proposed curriculum for Education for Sustainable Development which the government is planning to include in the revised National Curriculum for the year 2000 reflects the bureaucratic tone of the National Curriculum as a whole.

But it is only through working with government and influencing the thinking of ministers and civil servants that there is any real hope of bringing about effective environmental education in our schools and universities. The change of direction within society towards environmental sustainability has to come through education and the state education system is at the present time closely controlled and regulated by central government.

The sense of frustration which emerged in the workshop was the result of this impasse. Members of the group argued for a more 'hands on' approach, for more direct support to schools - not through documentation but through real practical examples of environmental education. A most impressive and moving account of working with young children was given by a deputy head of a primary school who had worked with Jane Goodall in Africa and was clearly steeped in the ethical values of environmentalism. He is attempting to teach environmental education holistically so that the children see all its aspects. For a series of lessons on 'Factory Farming' he brought into the classroom 10 chicks, rescued from a battery farm out of 18,000 destined for slaughter. In National Curriculum parlance such an approach would probably cover several 'learning outcomes'; in real life this young man's pupils learnt compassion, how to care for living things and the effect of industrialised farming on the animal kingdom.

The lively discussion led by Nick Jones revealed other inspiring examples of environmental education in practice. It is heartening to know that there is such a high level of commitment and expertise within the teaching profession. It is also heartening to realise that the present government is pledged to further the cause of sustainability.

Announcing the Panel on Sustainable Development Education, John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister, said: "We have put both education and sustainable development at the heart of our agenda". The task now is to bring these two concepts together and ensure that sustainability informs every aspect of educational practice. It will not be enough to 'bolt on' environmental education to the rest of the curriculum which is already overloaded. Every statutory subject of the National Curriculum should specify learning outcomes related to sustainability and every school should strive to become an 'eco school' living out its environmental values according to publicly declared sustainability indicators. It is to be hoped that the CEE will play a leading role in bringing these goals to fruition.

Mary Tasker

conclusion

How to educate our children so that they may play their part in bringing about a fairer and more sustainable world is the most serious challenge facing teachers and policy makers today. Increasingly, members of the public are coming to realise this, as was apparent in the varied backgrounds of the participants at this conference. Yet still the pressing concerns of the education system are portrayed in the media as exam results and league tables, literacy and numeracy schemes, action zones and learning grids.

This conference made a powerful case for putting education for sustainability at the heart of the curriculum. It also stressed the importance of **how** children learn to be environmentally aware and committed to sustainable values. These cannot be "bolted on" as an additional subject in an academic curriculum but have to permeate the whole curriculum and be experienced by the child in a practical way. From the point of view of Human Scale Education the best way of doing this is for children to be educated in small, human scale settings in which they can take personal responsibility for their own environment. This is the message we hope all who came to the conference took away with them and which is at the heart of our work.

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